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Missoula colony brings top scriptwriters to town

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NEWS RELEASE

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May 18, 2001

Contact: Director Greg Johnson, Montana Rep, 243-6809.

MISSOULA COLONY BRINGS TOP SCRIPTWRITERS TO TOWN

MISSOULA--

World-renowned writers for stage and screen will share their talents when the Missoula Colony returns to The University of Montana campus June 16-23.

Pulitzer Prize-winning author Marsha Norman heads a cast of visiting playwrights invited to the Missoula Colony by UM's Montana Repertory Theatre. The playwrights will guide invited colony participants in an intensive week of script writing and analysis. Local writers invited to participate this year include Kate Roxburgh, Regan deVictoria, Jim Peterson, Kate Hoffower, Chris Evans, Joan Melcher, Kay Whitlock and Greg Patent.

Opportunities for the public to participate include a "Back to Basics" weekend writing workshop and a series of staged readings.

The workshop, June 16-17, is for writers of all experience levels. Sessions are designed to stretch the experienced writer and introduce the beginning writer to techniques for stage and screen. Presenters are Norman, playwright Ron Fitzgerald and veteran stage and screenwriters Roger Hedden and James McLure.

The enrollment fee for the weekend workshop is \$50, or \$30 for high school and university students. Participants are encouraged to attend colony events the following week, where they can observe morning script-writing sessions and enjoy afternoon and evening readings at no additional charge. To register, call Mary Ann Riddle at the Montana Rep office, (406) 243-6809. The deadline to register is June 13.

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A series of staged readings June 17-19 and June 21-23 will present works by colony participants in the afternoons and by visiting playwrights in the evenings. The readings will be presented by a company of professional actors from Los Angeles and New York, UM drama/dance students and other local talent.

Public readings are scheduled for:

- **Sunday, June 17--** Selected exercises from the "Back to Basics" workshop, 8 p.m.
- **Monday, June 18 --** Kate Roxburgh and Regan deVictoria, 3 p.m.; Marsha Norman, 8 p.m.
- **Tuesday, June 19 --** Jim Peterson, 3 p.m.; Bill Yellow Robe Jr., 8 p.m.
- **Thursday, June 21 --** Kate Hoffower and Chris Evans, 3 p.m.; James McLure, 8 p.m.
- **Friday, June 22 --** Joan Melcher, 3 p.m.; Roger Hedden, 8 p.m.
- **Saturday, June 23 --** Kay Whitlock and Greg Patent, 3 p.m.; Ron Fitzgerald, 8 p.m.

Readings will take place in the Montana Theatre of the Performing Arts and Radio/Television Center. Admission is free for afternoon readings and \$5 for evening readings. A \$15 button entitles the wearer to attend all readings. Seating is limited, and advance purchase is encouraged; call (406) 243-6809. If available, buttons also will be sold at the door.

SIDEBAR:

The Missoula Colony's visiting playwrights are:

- Marsha Norman, Pulitzer-Prize winning author of "'night, Mother," "Getting Out" and "The Secret Garden."

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- Roger Hedden, whose screen-writing credits include “Bodies, Rest & Motion” and “Sleep With Me.” He wrote and directed the feature film “Hi-Life,” which starred Daryl Hannah, Charles Durning and Eric Stoltz.
- James McLure, whose plays have been produced regionally and on and off Broadway. He is the author of “Lone Star” and “Laundry and Bourbon.”
- Ron Fitzgerald, a Juilliard School graduate whose plays have been read at the prestigious O’Neill Conference.
- Bill Yellow Robe Jr., playwright, actor, director and poet. His plays have been produced and presented in readings across the country.

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